AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (currently amended)A method for validating network configuration change commands in a network environment, comprising:

providing a change command to a network management device residing in the network, the change command expresses a change to the configuration of the network and implicitly indicates an initial configuration state of the network;

determining a current configuration state of the network;

comparing the initial configuration state indicated by the change command to the current configuration state of the network; and

implementing the change command when the initial configuration state indicated by the change command correlates to ~~is expressed in terms of~~ the current configuration state of the network.

2. (original) The method of Claim 1 wherein the step of determining a current configuration state of the network further comprises accessing a virtual representation of the network configuration.

3. (cancel)

4. (original) The method of Claim 3 further comprising the step of disregarding the change command as being an invalid request when the initial configuration state indicated by the change command does not correlate to the current configuration state of the network.

5. (original) The method of Claim 1 wherein the change command is further defined as an assign command that establishes an association between a storage unit to a storage server, where the assign command implicitly indicates that the storage unit is currently not assigned within the network.

6. (original) The method of Claim 1 wherein the change command is further defined as an unassign command that disassociates a storage unit from a storage server, where the unassign command implicitly indicates that the storage unit is currently assigned within the network.

7. (original) A method for validating storage allocation commands in a storage area network, comprising:

providing a storage allocation command to a network management device residing in the network, the storage allocation command expresses a change to the configuration of storage resources and implicitly indicates an initial configuration state of the storage resources in the network;

determining a current configuration state of the storage resources in the network;

determining if the storage allocation command is expressed in terms of the current configuration state of the network; and

implementing the storage allocation command when the storage allocation command is expressed in terms of the current configuration state of the network.

8. (original) The method of Claim 7 further comprising the step of disregarding the storage allocation command as being an invalid request when the storage allocation command is not expressed in terms of the current configuration state of the network.

9. (original) The method of Claim 7 further comprising:

providing an assign command to the network management device, where the assign command establishes an association between a storage unit to a storage server, thereby granting the storage server read-write access to the storage unit;

determining if the storage unit is currently assigned in the network; and

implementing the assign command when the storage unit is currently unassigned in the network.

10. (original) The method of Claim 7 further comprising:

providing an unassign command to the network management device, where the unassign command disassociates a storage unit from a storage server;

determining if the storage unit is currently assigned in the network; and

implementing the unassign command when the storage unit is currently assigned in the network.

11. (original) The method of Claim 7 wherein the storage allocation command is selected for the group consisting of: assigning a storage unit to a storage server; assigning a storage unit to a shared group; and assigning a storage unit to an associated LUN group.

12. (currently amended) The method of Claim 11 wherein the storage allocation command implicitly indicates that the storage unit is not currently assigned to either the ~~a~~ storage server or the ~~an~~ associated LUN group and is not currently grouped in the ~~a~~ shared group.

13. (original) The method of Claim 11 further comprising:

determining if the storage unit is currently assigned in the network;

determining if the storage unit is currently grouped in the network; and

implementing the storage allocation command when the storage unit is currently not assigned and not grouped in the network.

14. (original) The method of Claim 7 wherein the storage allocation command is selected from the group consisting of: assigning an associated LUN group to a storage server; assigning an associated LUN group to a shared group; and assigning a storage server to a shared group.

15. (original) The method of Claim 14 wherein the storage allocation command implicitly indicates that each storage unit implicated by the command is associated with at least one of the ~~a~~ associated LUN group and the ~~a~~ shared group.

16. (original) The method of Claim 15 further comprising:

determining each storage unit associated with at least one of the associated LUN group and the shared group;

determining if each storage unit is currently grouped in the network; and

implementing the storage allocation command when each of the storage units is currently grouped in the network.